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FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7725  
INFO RUEHB/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 6224  
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO PRIORITY 6550  
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA PRIORITY 1811  
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 4574  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 5813  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 2104  
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA PRIORITY 3944  
RHMF/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEHN/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 1960  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 3061

C O N F I D E N T I A L KATHMANDU 000029

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TAGS: PGOV PTER PINR NP

SUBJECT: NEPAL: FIFTH MAOIST MINISTER CREATES WAVES BEFORE  
TAKING OATH OF OFFICE

REF: KATHMANDU 2139

Classified By: Ambassador Nancy J. Powell. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

Yadav Delays Swearing-in Ceremony To Protest Language

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¶1. (U) Matrika Yadav, the newly reappointed Minister for Forests and Soil Conservation, was sworn in on January 2 after first refusing to take the oath of office in Nepali. Yadav -- who was out of Kathmandu when the other Maoist ministers were sworn in on December 31 (reftel) -- demanded the oath be in his mother tongue of Maithili, a language widely spoken in the eastern Terai and the Indian state of Bihar. Yadav accused Prime Minister G.P. Koirala of insensitivity toward Madhesis and stormed out of the hall. He ignored pleas from Hisila Yami and Pampha Bhusal, two Maoist ministers sworn in on December 31, to return to the ceremony. Yadav also reportedly declined to take phone calls from Maoist chairman Pushpa Dahal (Prachanda) and deputy Baburam Bhattarai. Yadav returned an hour later and proceeded to take the oath, which the Prime Minister delivered in Nepali and Yadav repeated in Maithili.

Comment

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¶2. (C) While Matrika Yadav's linguistic stunt ostensibly was to support the Madhesi cause, it is a reminder that working with the Maoists is far from easy. We expect there will be other cabinet tirades in the coming months. The Nepali Congress and the Maoists have reached the conclusion they must work together -- at least for now -- but it is not a happy marriage.

POWELL